brick side-walks, the trees in the streets, the low houses with their white marble cuffs and collars, the pretty design of the place, all give it a character of its own. The people, too, have a character of their *own.* They dress, or at least *did* dress, very quietly. This was the only siga of their Quaker origin, except a very fastidious taste —in plays as in other things.

Mrs. Gillespie, the great-grandchild of Benjamin Franklin, was one of my earliest Philadelphia friends —a splendid type of the independent woman, a bit of the martinet, but immensely full of kindness and humour. She had a word to say in all Philadelphian matters. It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast to Mrs. Gillespie of Philadelphia than Mrs. Fields of Boston, that other great American lady whom to know is a liberal education.

Mrs. Fields reminded me of Lady Tennyson, Mrs. Tom Taylor, and Miss Hogarth (Dickens's sister-in-law) all rolled into one. Her house is full of relics of the past. There is a portrait of Dickens as a young man with long hair. He had a feminine face in those days, for all its strength. Hard by is a sketch of Keats by Severn, with a lock of the poet's hair. Opposite is a head of Thackeray, with a note in his hand-writing fastened below. " Good-bye, Mrs. Fields ; good-bye, my dear Fields ; good-bye to all. I go home."

Thackeray left Boston abruptly because a sudden desire to see his children had assailed him at Christmas time!

As you sit in Mrs. Fields* spacious room overlooking the Bay, you realise suddenly that before you ever

came into it, Dickens and Thackeray were both here, that this beautiful old lady who so kindly smiles on you has smiled on them and on many other great men of letters long since dead. It is here that they seem most alive. This is the house where the culture of Boston seems no fad to make a joke about, but a rare and delicate reality.